

## Report to the Council from the Policy and Research Board meeting on 10 April 2019

<b>Purpose of paper</b>	To report on the key items considered by the Policy and Research Board at its meeting on 10 April 2019.
<b>Action</b>	For <b>noting</b> .
<b>Corporate Strategy</b>	Performance objective 1: To improve our performance across all our functions so that we are highly effective as a regulator.
<b>Business Plan</b>	Priority one: Continue to build a cost effective and efficient organisation.
<b>Decision Trail</b>	In accordance with the General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Non-statutory Committees of Council the Policy and Research Board will report to the next Council meeting following its meeting.
<b>Recommendations</b>	The Council is asked to <b>note</b> the report.
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<b>Appendices</b>	

## **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1. This paper reports on key issues considered by the Policy and Research Board (the Board) at its meeting on 10 April 2019.

## **2. Introduction and background**

- 2.1. The key purpose of the Board as defined in its terms of reference is:

*“to provide oversight of the development and implementation of strategy, policy and research initiatives and report on them to the Council. In so doing, the Policy and Research Board will work with the Executive to ensure that strategy and policy making is coordinated across the GDC, liaising with other committees as appropriate”.*

- 2.2. In accordance with the General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Non-Statutory Committees of Council 2018, the Board is required to report to the Council meeting following each meeting. The Board met on 10 April 2019 at the Birmingham office.

## **3. Workshops**

- 3.1 The Board hosted a workshop with 15 invited registrants, including dentists, dental nurses, dental hygienists and therapists and technicians. The aim of the workshop was to provide registrants with an opportunity for open discussion with Council members on the key issues in dentistry that mattered to them. Discussions included the future of dentistry, challenges for the dental team and issues that the GDC should prioritise. The work that the GDC is doing to engage with students and professionals at the earliest stages of their careers was a particular focus of attention, linked to a broader discussion about the so-called “climate of fear”.
- 3.2 The second workshop focused on the development of principles of regulatory enforcement. The work forms part of the moving upstream programme and is intended to help embed the framework of “right-touch” regulation described by the PSA. The workshop highlighted the potential of this approach to force a consideration of what terms like “proportionality” actually mean for the GDC and its enforcement activity.

## **4 Shifting the balance programme update**

- 4.1 The Board received an update on the implementation of the projects contained with the programme. It asked for clarification of the status of the data and intelligence action plan. The Executive explained that rather than having a stand-alone plan, data, intelligence and research had been embedded and was being monitored across the workstreams in the programme.
- 4.2 The Board examined the timelines of various projects and noted that the majority of work remained on track. The improvements to the GDC website, referred in the previous update to Council, had been delayed because of more extensive than expected user feedback. A decision had been taken therefore to move the launch to later in the summer, to avoid any risk to the DCP ARF collection.

## **5 Promoting Professionalism**

- 5.1 The Board received a presentation on promoting professionalism from the Head of Upstream Regulation. The principles would be developed in co-production between the GDC, members of the profession and the public. To facilitate discussions between members of the profession and the public a joint event had been proposed for Q4 and it was anticipated that this meeting would include specified members of PRB. The aim was to provide a framework of principles to which

registrants would refer, particularly in difficult or challenging situations. Should a situation become an omission or other damaging act the principles of regulatory enforcement, workshopped earlier in the day, would be engaged. The Board was informed that for the remainder of 2019 the focus of the work would be on research and engagement and that updates from the research phase of the project would be available from the summer onwards. The Board would receive updates in the autumn as the work progressed.

## **6. Moving Upstream Conference 2020: early thoughts**

- 6.1 Whilst there had been a lot of positive feedback from the 2019 event some development opportunities had been identified, including the addition of breakout workshops, online participation and publishing the report in advance of the conference. The Board discussed some of the early proposals. The suggestion that documents linked to the conference should be released in advance of the conference was supported, however doubts were expressed that a March conference would be well attended given the business priorities for NHS dental teams at that time. It was suggested that in addition to inviting a minister or senior official to the conference, there could be some value in including other professionals or speakers from related industries. The importance of encouraging attendees from the four nations was discussed, and it was anticipated that the upcoming stakeholder events in Wales and Northern Ireland would encourage engagement. Additionally the committee noted the challenges of attracting all registrant groups from various disciplines across dentistry to engage effectively.

## **7. Horizon scanning report**

- 8.1 The Board received the horizon scanning report which had been received by Council at their March meeting.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 9.1 The Council is asked to **note** the items discussed by the Board on 10 April 2019.